

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 JIDDA 01431 011402Z

51

ACTION L-02

INFO OCT-01 NEA-09 ISO-00 MMS-01 AID-05 HEW-02 CU-02 SCA-01

IO-10 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01 INR-07 NSAE-00

NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 /074 W

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R 011325Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY JIDDA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 382

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, PINT, PORG, SA

SUBJECT: HUMAN RIGHTS

REF: (A) STATE 12320

(B) JIDDA 2165 (APRIL 1074)

1. IN FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS OF REF A THE EMBASSY HAS CAREFULLY REVIEWED ITS PREVIOUS SUBMISSION ON THE SUBJECT OF HUMAN RIGHTS (REF B) AND CONSIDERS THAT THE CONCLUSIONS REPORTED THERE ARE STILL VALID. AMONG THE CONCLUSIONS OF THAT TELEGRAM:

"THE SAUDI ARABIAN GOVERNMENT DOES NOT DEPEND UPON POLICE REPRESSION AND ARBITRARY ARREST AND DETENTION AS POLITICAL TOOLS FOR ENSURING THE LOYALTY AND DOCILITY OF ITS CITIZENS ..."

"(RHE KING'S) EXERCISE OF POWER IS CIRCUMSCRIBED BY THE NEED TO CONFORM TO ACCEPTED TRADITIONAL SECULAR AND RELIGIOUS NORMS ..."

"THERE IS BY NO MEANS A CONSENSUS IN THE KINGDOM ... EITHER AMONG THE GOVERNED OR GOVERNING THAT (MODERNIZATION) SHOULD INCLUDE THE ADOPTION OF WESTERN CONSTITUTIONAL LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 02 JIDDA 01431 011402Z

AND OTHER MODELS ..."

"THE POSITION OF THE SAG WOULD BE THAT THE CITIZENS OF THE KINGDOM ARE TREATED JUSTLY AND FAIRLY IN ACCORDANCE WITH ISLAMIC LAW AND PRACTICE AND THAT IT IS IN ANY CASE NO BUSINESS OF THE USG . . ."

2. THE EMBASSY OFFERS THE FOLLOWING COMMENTS ADDITIONAL TO THOSE CONTAINED IN ITS LAST SUBMISSION.

A. MILITARY ASSISTANCE. THE SAG IS NO LONGER A RECIPIENT OF GRANT MILITARY ASSISTANCE.

B. RELIGION. THE RELIGION OF SAUDI ARABIA IS A PURITANICAL, ORTHODOX VERSION OF ISLAM. THE PRACTICE OF MORE HETERODOX FORMS OF ISLAM IS TOLERATED. PUBLIC WORSHIP BY RELIGIONS OTHER THAN ISLAM IS NOT PERMITTED.

C. WOMEN. BY U.S. STANDARDS THE STATUS OF WOMEN IS DEPLORABLE: WOMEN HAVE NO POLITICAL RIGHTS, MAY NOT DRIVE AUTOMOBILES, MUST GO VEILED IN PUBLIC, MAY NOT MINGLE WITH MEN IN PUBLIC PLACES AND EVEN IN THE HOME ONLY WITH MALES WHO ARE RELATIVES OR VERY CLOSE FAMILY FRIENDS. BY THE STANDARDS OF SAUDI SOCIETY--INCLUDING PARTICULARLY STANDARDS UPHELD BY WOMEN--THESE RESTRICTIONS ARE NOT ONEROUS BUT REFLECT A NATURAL STATE OF AFFAIRS. NONETHELESS, VERY RAPID CHANGE IS UNDERWAY. PUBLIC EDUCATION FOR GIRLS ONLY BEGAN A DOZEN YEARS AGO BUT HAS NOW OVERCOME INITIAL PUBLIC RESISTANCE TO BECOME MUCH IN DEMAND. THE GOVERNMENT IS ENGAGED IN AN EXTENSIVE PROGRAM OF SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION FOR GIRLS (THEY ARE OF COURSE EDUCATED SEPARATELY FROM BOYS) AND EDUCATION FOR GIRLS IS BECOMING AVAILABLE EVEN IN REMOTE AREAS. INCREASING NUMBERS OF SAUDI WOMEN ARE RECEIVING ADVANCED EDUCATIONS ABROAD AND ARE DEMANDING AND (IN SOME CASES OBTAINING) THE RIGHT TO BE EMPLOYED IN OTHER THAN TEACHING AND SOCIAL WORK WHICH HAVE HERETOFORE BEEN THE ONLY ACCEPTABLE PROFESSIONS FOR WOMEN. THE FIRST CLASS OF FEMALE STUDENTS HAS RECENTLY BEEN ENROLLED AT RIYADH UNIVERSITY MEDICAL SCHOOL. NUMEROUS ADDITIONAL EXAMPLES CAN BE CITED. CHANGE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 JIDDA 01431 011402Z

IS RAPID AND ACCELERATING. EVEN THE MOST LIBERAL SAUDIS WITH WHOM WE HAVE DISCUSSED THE SUBJECT, HOWEVER, HAVE BEEN EXPLICIT IN STATING THAT THIS IS AN AREA IN WHICH U.S. OR ANY FOREIGN INTERFERENCE IS NOT WELCOME. SAUDI ARABIA, THEY SAY, WILL EVOLVE A NEW STATUS FOR ITS WOMEN IN ITS OWN WAY AND IN ITS OWN TIME.

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** HUMAN RIGHTS, CENTRAL GOVERNMENT, SOCIAL CHANGE  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 01 MAR 1975  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** johnsorg  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
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**Office:** ACTION L  
**Original Classification:** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
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**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
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**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** HUMAN RIGHTS  
**TAGS:** PFOR, PINT, PORG, SA  
**To:** STATE  
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